

Training Leaders of Cadets – “Leading Cadets” Block (L3)

LEADING INDIRECTLY

Scope: If cadets are to become leaders, the senior members who guide them must take a leadership approach that nurtures the cadets’ potential. During this seminar, students will discuss what it means to lead indirectly, and discuss practical methods for coaching and mentoring cadets. Through the use of case studies, students will apply principles of indirect leadership to common leadership challenges at the squadron level.

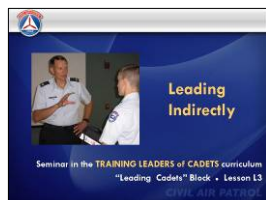
Format: Guided Discussion with Case Studies

Duration: 50 minutes

Objectives:

1. Define “indirect leadership.”
2. Discuss ways to lead cadets indirectly.
3. Describe principles of indirect leadership related to counseling and disciplining cadets.
4. Apply principles of indirect leadership to case studies.
5. Justify the use of indirect leadership methods to develop cadets’ potential.

Resources: Case studies; note-taker; PowerPoint slides.



STARTING POINT

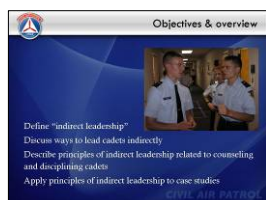
[Introduce yourself and state the seminar’s topic.]



INTRODUCTION

[Rhetorical Question]

“Leaders don’t create followers, they create more leaders.” How do you take a young cadet who can barely follow directions and transform them into a mature, confident leader?



OBJECTIVES & OVERVIEW

During the next hour, we’ll try to answer that question. Here’s our objectives and itinerary for this seminar. [See slide]



MAIN POINT #1: INDIRECT LEADERSHIP FOCUSES ON DEVELOPING CADETS' POTENTIAL TO LEAD

[Guided Discussion]

Let's begin by defining our term. **What is "indirect leadership"? What does it mean for a senior member to lead cadets indirectly?**

[List student's responses on the white board. If possible, do not erase the responses until the seminar concludes.]

Anticipated Responses:

Helping cadets think critically; coaching and mentoring; defining the job, but not prescribing the solution; leading by getting others to lead; allowing cadets to have some authority and be "in charge"; "high relationship" behavior in terms of situational leadership; supporting the cadet's risk-taking; encouraging and supporting them in making decisions; effective delegation; etc.

The common thread in our discussion is that in the Cadet Program, we like to use indirect leadership because those methods match-up with our goal of developing cadets' potential to become leaders themselves.

TRANSITION: Using the attributes on the whiteboard as our informal, working definition, let's get practical and discuss some methods of indirect leadership.



MAIN POINT #2: USE INDIRECT LEADERSHIP METHODS EVERY STAGE OF THE PROJECT

[Guided Discussion]

As senior members, what are some practical ways to lead cadets indirectly and develop their potential? That's a big question that we can take in several directions, so let's consider that topic in the three bite-size questions listed on the slide:

[Make 3-columns on the white board, and list student's responses to each of the 3 questions below under the appropriate column.]

When getting cadets started on a new project or assigning them to a new staff position, what are some good methods of indirect leadership?

Anticipated Responses: Give "mission-type orders" that define the goals, but do not prescribe how to get the job done; show the relationship between the cadet's assignment and other projects and the squadron's overall mission; lead the cadet in a discussion of what some of the factors surrounding the project's main issues; discuss the criteria for "success"; make clear what authority they have and who they report to; let cadets know what resources are available to them; discuss timelines and deadlines; etc.

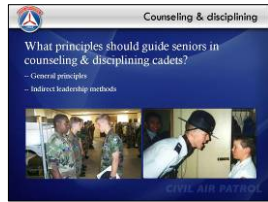
In the midst of the project, the cadet might stumble or lose focus. How do you adjust the cadet's leadership to keep them on track?

Anticipated Responses: Ask a lot of questions; have the cadet restate his objectives; have the cadet explain how his leadership behavior is bringing the group toward the objective; ask the cadet to identify some of the ideas he considered but rejected, and explain why; ask the cadet what resources are available to him, and if he is making the most of them; etc. ask the cadet to describe what is going well, and what is not going as planned; for every response from the cadet, ask "why?"; emphasize the positive; encourage the cadet to keep trying; etc.

The end of any project or staff assignment is a good time to take stock in what went well and what didn't go as planned. What types of indirect leadership techniques can you suggest in debriefing cadets and helping them learn from their mistakes?

Anticipated Responses: Ask them to describe what went well, and what could be improved; have the cadet evaluate their success against the objectives and criteria; have other cadets offer feedback, versus having the debrief be strictly senior to cadet; emphasize the positive; if there were failures, ask the cadet what they learned from the experience and help them not repeat the mistake; etc.

TRANSITION: This discussion has generated lots of great practical methods for leading cadets indirectly. Next, let's carry this conversation over to the realm of counseling and disciplining cadets.



MAIN POINT #3: TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH TOWARD COUNSELING & DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

[Guided Discussion]

There is a degree of discipline, regimentation, and military bearing expected in the Cadet Program, but there's a right way and a wrong way to go about that, as illustrated by this slide. **What principles should guide seniors and cadet staff in counseling and disciplining cadets? How can we take a positive approach toward disciplinary actions? As we discuss this issue, general principles in counseling and disciplining cadets are welcome, but let's keep focused on indirect leadership methods during this discussion.**

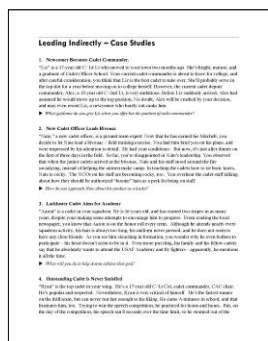
Anticipated Responses:

Indirect Leadership: Remember the Cadet Program is a learning environment; make the intervention timely -- the longer you wait, the more directive it has to be; involve the cadet staff in the solution; make the problem the cadet's, not yours -- ask the cadet what they are going to do about the problem; etc.

General Guidelines: Focus on performance, not personality; in re-directing cadets' behavior, be specific and avoid generalities; working through the chain of command, correct cadets on the spot; withhold promotions and special privileges from problem cadets; be sure to hear all sides of the story; etc.

Remember, not all counseling opportunities arise because something negative has happened. If you build a rapport with cadets by using good leadership skills, you will be someone they will turn to for advice in picking a college, for example.

TRANSITION: We have defined "indirect leadership" and discussed methods of leading cadets indirectly in a variety of situations. Let's see you apply your understanding of indirect leadership to some case studies illustrating leadership challenges you might encounter in your squadron.



MAIN POINT #4: CASE STUDIES

[Distribute the case studies hand-out. Divide the class into groups of 2-4 students and assign each group 1 or 2 case studies, depending on the time remaining in the seminar. Allow the students to spend 5-10 minutes analyzing the case studies and discussing a course of action. Re-form the class and have a representative of each group summarize their case, identify the problem, and describe their solution.]

Anticipated Responses:

[The major issues of each case are listed below. Each group's solution should at least recognize these issues and attempt to address them by applying indirect leadership principles. If it is apparent that the group did not consider the major issues listed below, consider using those issues as follow-up questions. (IE: "Did you consider . . . ")]

1. Newcomer Becomes Cadet Commander

- Liz needs help getting started as the new cadet commander, and Alex will need help staying focused and overcoming his disappointment.
- Do you meet with Alex? How do you break the news to him?
- In getting Liz started as cadet commander, do you offer her any advice in getting off to a good start with Alex as her deputy?

2. New Cadet Officer Leads Bivouac

- The senior staff needs to guide Nate in correcting his behavior so that he leads by example.
- The group should wonder why Nate is acting cocky, but not jump to conclusions. Is Nate's cockiness a character flaw, or is he unaware how to set a good example as a cadet officer?
- What types of indirect leadership methods can guide Nate into leading by example and getting his staff to abandon their cocky attitudes as well?

3. Lackluster Cadet Aims for Academy

- Aaron's outward attitude and behavior do not match his ambitions.
- Is Aaron aware that his attitude and behavior are lackluster? Have the leaders made clear their expectations of cadets, especially those aiming for the Academy?
- Does Aaron see how CAP experience can help him achieve his goal?
- Are there any outstanding cadets who could mentor Aaron?

4. Outstanding Cadet is Never Satisfied

- Ryan is a high-achiever who is overly critical of himself. If you remove him as cadet commander, he will take that news very hard.
- Do you let Ryan's personality influence your decision about whether it is time another cadet served as cadet commander?
- How do you break the news to Ryan, if you do replace him?
- Is Ryan aware that others think he is an outstanding cadet, but is hyper-critical of himself? Does he think he is that awful?

5. NCO Tries to Coach Cadets in Drill

- a. TSgt Flanders' motives seem pure, but apparently he lacks finesse in correcting cadets and is heavy-handed in his intervention.
- b. How do you describe the role of senior members to him?
- c. How can TSgt Flanders' enthusiasm and expertise be channeled in the right direction?

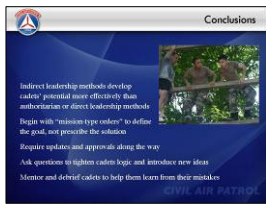
6. Young Cadet Officer Takes Charge

- a. Philip took too much initiative during the brief time he was put in charge of the flight, and used an unnecessarily authoritarian leadership style when correcting the cadets.
- b. You don't want to correct Philip in public, but you don't support his actions. Do you reverse Philip by telling the cadets they do not have to write the essay? How do you respond?
- c. How do you teach Philip not to overstep his bounds, without having him think that all forms of initiative are inappropriate?

7. Irate Parent Confronts You in Public

- a. Heidi is a loose cannon.
- b. Is it possible to reason with Heidi at this moment?
- c. How can you channel Heidi's support for her son's involvement in CAP into something positive?
- d. Does her threat to call wing headquarters concern you?

TRANSITION: These case studies are not unrealistic, they represent the types of leadership challenges you'll face every week in CAP. Judging by how you handled the case studies, it seems that if you keep your cool, ask the right questions, and try to lead cadets indirectly, you'll overcome those leadership challenges every time. Let's wrap-up this seminar by briefly identifying some conclusions we can draw from our discussions.



CONCLUSIONS

[See slide.]



REMOTIVATION & CLOSING

[See slide.]